

WO-347

1934-1935

United States Coast Guard Tower

Ocean City

Private

The United States Coast Guard tower is a five-story, braced metal structure situated at the foot on the boardwalk next to the Ocean City inlet. The tapering tower contains a four-flight ladder-type stair that rises within the structure to a trap door is the cabin floor. The platform cabin is of frame construction with corner pilasters and weatherboard sides.

This is the oldest observation tower standing along Maryland's seashore. Erected in 1934-1935, the tower was built to aid in the life-saving services provided by the United States Coast Guard.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TOWER

MHT Inventory Number: NO-347

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

ARCHITECTURE
TRANSPORTATION

2) Geographic Orientation:

EASTERN SHORE

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

MODERN PERIOD 1930- PRESENT

4) Resource Type(s):

STANDING STRUCTURE
COASTAL OBSERVATION TOWER

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. WO-347

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TOWER

and/or common

2. Location

street & number South end of the Boardwalk and South 2nd St. ☐ not for publication

city, town Ocean City ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name City Council of Ocean City

street & number City Hall telephone no.:

city, town Ocean City state and zip code MD 21842

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WO-347

Condition

☐ excellent

☒ good

☐ fair

☐ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered

☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The United States Coast Guard tower stands at the south end of the boardwalk along South Second Street in Ocean City, Worcester County, Maryland.

Erected in 1934-1935, the braced metal tower tapers as it rises four flights to the observation platform which has an enclosed cabin. The cross-braced riveted structure contains is enclosed at its base with a combination of picket fence and display cases for the adjacent Life-Saving Station museum. Contained within the outside metal structure is a ladder-type stair that rises in four steep flights with a fixed handrail. The top flight provides access to a trap door fixed in the floor of the observation cabin. The frame cabin is a weatherboarded structure approximately 10' by 10'. Trimming the exterior corners are simple pilasters. The south face of the cabin is pierced by a tripartite window, whereas the west side is marked by a single window and door. The door provides access to the small deck that encircles the cabin. A pipe railing encloses the deck.

Rising against the west side of the cabin is an attached ladder that leads to the rooftop observation platform atop the cabin. A pipe railing encloses the top of the platform.

8. Significance

Survey No. WO-347

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The United States Coast Guard tower is a five-story, braced metal observation tower erected at the south end of Ocean City after the inlet was formed during the 1933 storm. The tapering tower contains a four-flight ladder-type stair that rises within the tower structure to a trap door in the cabin floor. The platform cabin is of frame construction with simple pilasters defining the exterior corners. A vertical ladder fixed to the west side of the cabin provides access to a observation deck on the roof of the cabin.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

This is the oldest observation tower standing along Maryland's Atlantic seashore. Erected in 1934-1935, the tower was situated at the foot of Ocean City next to the newly created inlet, carved through the barrier island by the destructive 1933 storm.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WO-347

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Worcester County date 3/30/90

street & number Worcester County Courthouse telephone 632-1194

city or town Snow Hill state MD 21863

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
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